

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 /069 W

-----054573 282123Z /64

R 271306Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9161

INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI, SHUM

SUBJECT: CLUB 19 MEETING IN CALABAR HALTED BY THE POLICE

REF: (A) LAGOS 7365, (B) LAGOS 7183

1. ACCORDING TO A JUNE 27 FRONTPAGE REPORT IN THE DAILY TIMES (DT), A CLUB QO MEETING IN CALABAR OVER THE WEEKEND WAS BROKEN UP BY THE POLICE. IN WHAT THE DT DESCRIBES AS A "CAT AND MOUSE GAME" CLUB MEMBERS WERE TRAILED BY THE POLICE AND "KEPT CHANGING THE VENUE FOR THE MEETING."

2. FINALLY, ACCORDING TO THE DT, CLUB MEMBERS WERE CORNERED AND TOLD BY DETECTIVE CHIEF D.A. OBAZUWA, "I HAVE INSTRUCTIONS THAT YOUR MEETING IS POLITICAL AND, THEREFORE, IS DISALLOWED. YOU ARE TO PACK AND LEAVE HERE IMMEDIATELY." CLUB MEMEBERS WHO SAID THAT THEY HAD COME TO CALABR FOR LUNCH RETORTED, "WE HAVE LAUNCHED THIS CLUB SUCCESSFULLY IN SOKOTO AND A FEW OTHER PLACES IN THE COUNTRY. WHY MUST THE SITUATION BE DIFFERENT IN CALABAR?" A CLUB

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MEMBER IS QUOTED FURTHER, "THIS IS CERTAINLY THE HANDIWORK OF ONE OF OUR COLLEAGUES." THAT COULD BE CORRECT AS THE DT ALSO REPORTS THAT WOMEN DEMONSTRATORS "EMERGED FROM THE BUSH" WITH PLACARDS TELLING THE CLUB 19 PEOPLE TO LEAVE, CALABAR HAS "PEOPLE TO LEAD US."

3. COMMENT: CLUB 19 MIDDLE BELT LEADER PAUL
UNONGO TOLD US RECENTLY THAT THE CLUB WAS IN THE
PROCESS OF LAUNCHING STATE BRANCHES ACROSS
THE COUNTRY. THAT MAY HAVE BEEN THE PRUPOSE OF
THE CALABAR MEETING. WE ASSUME THAT AS LONG AS
THE BAN ON POLITICS REMAINS IN EFFECT, A USEFUL
TACTIC FOR ASPIRING POLITICIANS IS TO
INFORM THE POLICE OF OPPONENETS" MEETINGS.
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